MAY 8, 1970

Last night Recitation Hall burned down in a clear act of arson. We, the Ad Hoc Strike Steering Committee, deplore this wanton, irrational, manifestly apolitical act of violence.

Yesterday afternoon we met with the faculty for the purpose of discussing ways in which the students and faculty could work together for our common goals. The very first response was a suggestion that one of those goals be the prevention of violence during the strike. With due respect to the sincerity of that response, it disturbed us a great deal. We felt then that violence was simply not an issue at Middlebury. We felt that our real goal was to contribute in some way to the prevention of the violence that takes place at the hands of our government, in our name, both home and abroad. We felt that a theoretical discussion about the problem of violence at Middlebury would only serve to divert attention away from the obviously non-violent alternatives that are open to us at Middlebury. As that building burned, we felt that we had been tragically wrong. But as we began to reflect we came to the decision that our initial response to the issue of violence at Middlebury was correct. We must now accept the possibility of violence at Middlebury. We on the Steering Committee do not believe that the possibility of further violence imply makes violence an issue. The possibilty was always there. The possibilty of more violence remains. We believe that the principles of this strike are utterly incompatible the motivations that lead to last night's fire-bombing- whatever they may be. Our strike is a course of action which we, the Middlebury Community, believe is rational. We cannot let this irrational act sway us from our rational course. We are mindful of the violence in society at large, aware of the possible consequences for our community , determined that our action must in some way contribute to the mitigation of that violence. We choose to fight violence with reasonable action. We insist that all practicle measures be taken to prevent fuether violance. We, the students, will protect our campus. But we do not believe that a prolonged theoretical debate on the "issue" of violence at Middlebury will serve any other purpose than to divert attention from our real, achievable goals.

There are those that will say we are ignoring the reality of violence at Middlebury. We submit that to divert our attention and energy from our freely chosen course of action would be to ignore the reality of a strike at Middlebury, of which we, the students, are very, very proud.

We cherish the strike's accomplishments and we must protect its future. Let us each defeat the violence within us by continuing our communal effort to redeem our nation. Work, organize, canvas- involve yourself in this redemption.

MAY 8 1970

Middlebury College should endorse in full the aims of the national student strike, that is ;

1.) Calling for an end to American military involvement in Southeast Asia.

2.) Calling for an end to the unjust repression of political dissent and political prisoners.

3.) Calling for an end to University complicity with the military.

Over four hundred colleges have joined in support of the above.

Professors at Middlebury will hold classes for any students who wish them to do so. Thus, students who want to complete their semester may have the opportunity.

There will be no academic penalty or punishment for any student as a result of these actions.

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